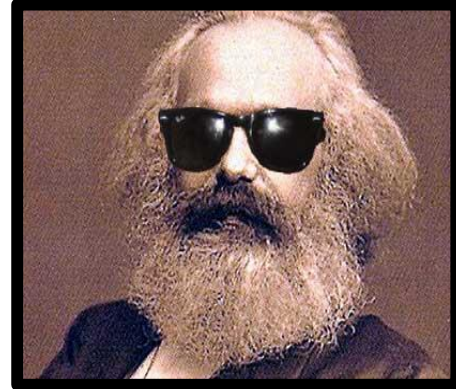


MARXIST “LENSES”

*To analyze a text (book, story, drama, art)
“from the Marxist perspective”
is to argue that the text’s conflicts originate
from any of the following claims:*



(1a) All divisions (“splits between people”) in a society—including race, religion, sex, sexual orientation, gender, socioeconomic status, age, nationality, et cetera—trace back to capitalism.

(1b) Capitalism divides people in a society into two simple, always opposing forces (or “camps”): the bourgeoisie (“the haves”) and the proletariat (“have-nots”).

(2) Marx states that, the bourgeoisie “has stripped of its halo every occupation honored and looked up to with reverent awe... the physician, the lawyer, the priest, the poet, the man of science, into its paid wage laborers.” What he means is that the “honor” of all “honorable professions” is extinct. (EXAMPLES: Instead of becoming a lawyer to defend the innocent; instead of becoming a doctor because you want to help the ill; instead of becoming a religious figure seeking to protect faith; instead of becoming an artist to give the world your art “for art’s sake,” Marx argues that all of these “honorable professions” are, today, focused exclusively on making money.)

(3) Under the bourgeoisie, a proletarian has no “personal worth,” but rather “exchange value.” (The bourgeoisie makes us believe that the way we make money is “who we are.” Therefore the outcome of work—making money—plays a role in how others see us, and how we see ourselves.)

(4) The bourgeoisie (and bourgeois attitudes) take the charm (or “character”) out of being a proletariat (“workman”). As the repulsiveness of proletariat work increases, the proletarian’s wage decreases.

(5) Property ownership—the ownership of land *and* anything else consumable and coveted (“wanted”) by others—exemplifies the bourgeoisies’ power. The proletariat works *for* the bourgeoisie, *producing* consumable goods *for* the bourgeoisie, to make money and *buy* from the bourgeoisie. This “lines the pockets” (and maintains the power) of the bourgeoisie.

(6) We must abolish of practice of inheritance. When wealth is passed from one bourgeoisie generation to the next, it *sustains* bourgeois *power*. For the proletariat, *poverty* is passed down from one generation to the next.

(7) As the use of machinery and the division of labor increases, *divisions* between proletarians will increase. In other words, the working class loses jobs to—among other things—machines; when that happens, workers will grow divided, hoping that “they” and not “the other guys” will retain paying jobs.

(8) The corruption of religion is a means by which the bourgeoisie keeps the proletariat “in its rightful place.”

(9) The bourgeoisie *falsely* claims that, through hard work and determination, a proletarian (member of the working class) can “become” a member of the bourgeoisie (“upper class”). This lie is just another means by which the bourgeoisie (“the man” or “the haves”) keeps the proletariat (“the working class, the have-nots”) in its “rightful place”—at the bottom of the social ladder.

(10) According to Marx, to stop the ruling power of the bourgeoisie, the proletariat must *REVOLT!*